

'I Ran Away to Sea at Fifty'

Mrs. Bruce Fahnestock, 75, Dies; Traveler and Author

From the Herald Tribune Bureau

WASHINGTON, Dec. 30.—Mrs. Bruce Fahnestock, seventy-five, world traveler, author and prominent in Washington society for many years, died of a stroke today at her home, 2438 P. St., N. W.

Although she had been in poor health with a heart ailment for several years, her death was unexpected. She had returned home only yesterday from passing the Christmas holiday with the family of her daughter, Mrs. Thomas Plummer, in Media, Pa.

After a three-year cruise in the South Seas aboard a sixty-five-foot schooner, Mrs. Fahnestock in 1939 wrote a best-seller, "I Ran Away to Sea at Fifty."

Survived Sinking

In 1940, with two sons, she started another South Seas cruise aboard a 137-foot diesel-powered schooner. The yacht struck the Great Barrier Reef near Sydney, Australia, and sank. All hands were saved.

The accident was blamed on faulty, 200-year-old charts, British authorities reportedly having denied the party use of more modern ones lest they fall into the hands of the Japanese or other enemies at that time.

Mrs. Fahnestock was the only woman on the expedition, sponsored by the American Museum of Natural History for the purpose of recording aboriginal music, study of bird life, and mapping remote islands.

Her sons, Bruce jr. and Sheri-

dan Fahnestock, accompanied their mother on this trip, which had the personal good wishes of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who asked to be kept advised of the party's progress. Fourteen other young men were aboard. Mrs. Fahnestock was chief cook, in charge of some twenty-three tons of food aboard. The sinking occurred after the vessel was nine months out from the United States.

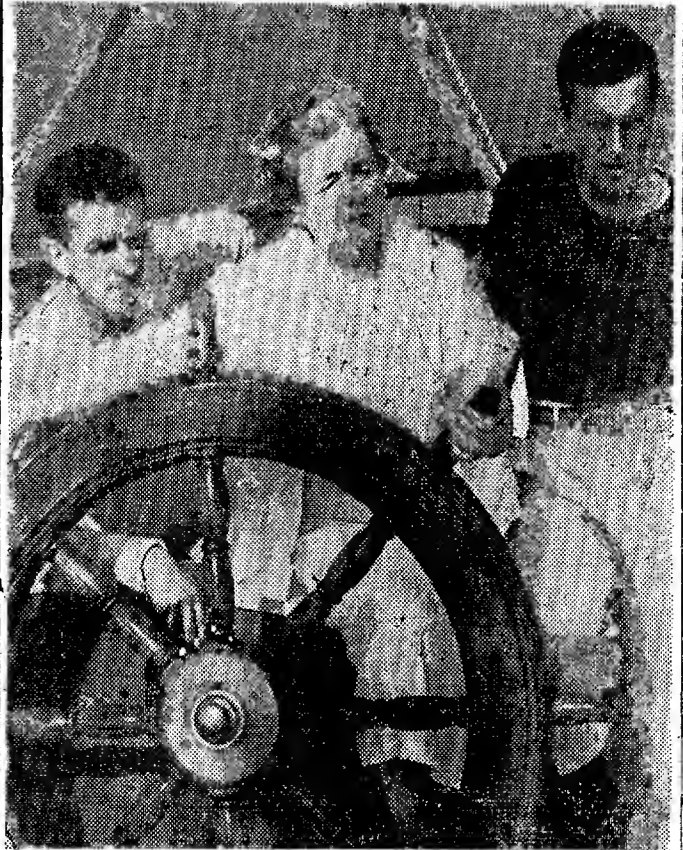
Husband an Inventor

Born Mary Eleonor Sheridan in Wedona, Iowa, in 1879, she was brought to Washington as a child. She attended Georgetown Visitation Convent and Trinity College, being graduated from the latter institution in its first class fifty years ago.

Her husband, Bruce Fahnestock, was an inventor. After his death in 1933, Mrs. Fahnestock and her children moved to Long Island. She returned to Washington eleven years ago, living in Alexandria, Va., for a time.

Mrs. Fahnestock continued her world travels in recent years and was active as a member of the Women Geographers and of the American Newspaper Women's Club. Until recently she also was active in the White House Spanish class.

Bruce Fahnestock jr. was killed in New Guinea in 1942 while serving as an Army lieutenant. His brother, Sheridan, now lives in Park Hall, Md.



Mrs. Bruce Fahnestock at the helm of her schooner, "Director II," before her 1940 expedition to the South Seas, with her sons, Bruce jr. (left), killed in World War II, and Sheridan.